

PART 32—LENDING LIMITS

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AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*, 84, and 93a.

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§ 32.1 Authority, purpose and scope.

(a) *Authority.* This part is issued pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*, 12 U.S.C. 84, and 12 U.S.C. 93a.

(b) *Purpose.* The purpose of this part is to protect the safety and soundness of national banks by preventing excessive loans to one person, or to related persons that are financially dependent, and to promote diversification of loans and equitable access to banking services.

(c) *Scope.* (1) This part applies to all loans and extensions of credit made by national banks and their domestic operating subsidiaries. This part does not apply to loans made by a national bank and its domestic operating subsidiaries to the bank's "affiliates," as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. 371c(b)(1), to the bank's operating subsidiaries, or to Edge Act or Agreement Corporation subsidiaries.

(2) The lending limits in this part are separate and independent from the investment limits prescribed by 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh), and a national bank may make loans or extensions of credit to one borrower up to the full amount permitted by this part and also hold eligible securities of the same obligor up to the full amount permitted under 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh) and 12 CFR part 1.

(3) Extensions of credit to executive officers, directors and principal shareholders of national banks, and their related interests are subject to limits prescribed by 12 U.S.C. 375a and 375b in addition to the lending limits established by 12 U.S.C. 84 and this part.

(4) In addition to the foregoing, loans and extensions of credit made by national banks and their domestic operating subsidiaries must be consistent with safe and sound banking practices.

§ 32.2 Definitions.

(a) *Borrower* means a person who is named as a borrower or debtor in a loan or extension of credit, or any other person, including a drawer, endorser, or guarantor, who is deemed to be a borrower under the "direct benefit" or the "common enterprise" tests set forth in § 32.5.

(b) *Capital and surplus* means—

(1) A bank's Tier 1 and Tier 2 capital included in the bank's risk-based capital under the OCC's Minimum Capital Ratios in Appendix A of part 3 of this chapter; plus

(2) The balance of a bank's allowance for loan and lease losses not included in the bank's Tier 2 capital, for purposes of the calculation of risk-based capital under part 3 of this chapter.

(c) *Close of business* means the time at which a bank closes its accounting records for the business day.

(d) *Consumer* means the user of any products, commodities, goods, or services, whether leased or purchased, but does not include any person who purchases products or commodities for resale or fabrication into goods for sale.

(e) *Consumer paper* means paper relating to automobiles, mobile homes, residences, office equipment, household items, tuition fees, insurance premium fees, and similar consumer items. Consumer paper also includes paper covering the lease (where the bank is not the owner or lessor) or purchase of equipment for use in manufacturing, farming, construction, or excavation.

(f) *Contractual commitment to advance funds.* (1) The term includes a bank's obligation to—

(i) Make payment (directly or indirectly) to a third person contingent upon default by a customer of the bank in performing an obligation and to make such payment in keeping with the agreed upon terms of the customer's contract with the third person, or to make payments upon some other stated condition;

(ii) Guarantee or act as surety for the benefit of a person;

(iii) Advance funds under a qualifying commitment to lend, as defined in paragraph (1) of this section; and

(iv) Advance funds under a standby letter of credit as defined in paragraph (p) of this section, a put, or other similar arrangement.

(2) The term does not include commercial letters of credit and similar instruments where the issuing bank expects the beneficiary to draw on the issuer, that do not guarantee payment, and that do not provide for payment in the event of a default by a third party.

(g) *Control* is presumed to exist when a person directly or indirectly, or acting through or together with one or more persons—

(1) Owns, controls, or has the power to vote 25 percent or more of any class of voting securities of another person;

(2) Controls, in any manner, the election of a majority of the directors, trustees, or other persons exercising similar functions of another person; or

(3) Has the power to exercise a controlling influence over the management or policies of another person.

(h) *Current market value* means the bid or closing price listed for an item in a regularly published listing or an electronic reporting service.

(i) *Financial instrument* means stocks, notes, bonds, and debentures traded on a national securities exchange, OTC margin stocks as defined in Regulation U, 12 CFR part 221, commercial paper, negotiable certificates of deposit, bankers' acceptances, and shares in money market and mutual funds of the type that issue shares in which banks may perfect a security interest. Financial instruments may be denominated in foreign currencies that are freely convertible to U.S. dollars. The term "financial instrument" does not include mortgages.

(j) *Loans and extensions of credit* means a bank's direct or indirect advance of funds to or on behalf of a borrower based on an obligation of the borrower to repay the funds or repayable from specific property pledged by or on behalf of the borrower.

(1) Loans or extensions of credit for purposes of 12 U.S.C. 84 and this part include—

(i) A contractual commitment to advance funds, as defined in paragraph (f) of this section;

(ii) A maker or endorser's obligation arising from a bank's discount of commercial paper;

(iii) A bank's purchase of securities subject to an agreement that the seller will repurchase the securities at the end of a stated period, but not including a bank's purchase of Type I securities, as defined in part 1 of this chapter, subject to a repurchase agreement, where the purchasing bank has assured control over or has established its rights to the Type I securities as collateral;

(iv) A bank's purchase of third-party paper subject to an agreement that the seller will repurchase the paper upon default or at the end of a stated period. The amount of the bank's loan is the total unpaid balance of the paper owned by the bank less any applicable dealer reserves retained by the bank and held by the bank as collateral security. Where the seller's obligation to repurchase is limited, the bank's loan is measured by the total amount of the paper the seller may ultimately be obligated to repurchase. A bank's purchase of third party paper without direct or indirect recourse to the seller is not a loan or extension of credit to the seller;

(v) An overdraft, whether or not prearranged, but not an intra-day overdraft for which payment is received before the close of business of the bank that makes the funds available;

(vi) The sale of Federal funds with a maturity of more than one business day, but not Federal funds with a maturity of one day or less or Federal funds sold under a continuing contract; and

(vii) Loans or extensions of credit that have been charged off on the books of the bank in whole or in part, unless the loan or extension of credit—

(A) Is unenforceable by reason of discharge in bankruptcy;

(B) Is no longer legally enforceable because of expiration of the statute of limitations or a judicial decision; or

(C) Is no longer legally enforceable for other reasons, provided that the bank maintains sufficient records to demonstrate that the loan is unenforceable.

(2) The following items do not constitute loans or extensions of credit for purposes of 12 U.S.C. 84 and this part—

(i) Additional funds advanced for the benefit of a borrower by a bank for payment of taxes, insurance, utilities, security, and maintenance and operating expenses necessary to preserve the value of real property securing the loan, consistent with safe and sound banking practices, but only if the advance is for the protection of the bank's interest in the collateral, and provided that such amounts must be treated as an extension of credit if a new loan or extension of credit is made to the borrower;

(ii) Accrued and discounted interest on an existing loan or extension of credit, including interest that has been capitalized from prior notes and interest that has been advanced under terms and conditions of a loan agreement;

(iii) Financed sales of a bank's own assets, including Other Real Estate Owned, if the financing does not put the bank in a worse position than when the bank held title to the assets;

(iv) A renewal or restructuring of a loan as a new "loan or extension of credit," following the exercise by a bank of reasonable efforts, consistent with safe and sound banking practices, to bring the loan into conformance with the lending limit, unless new funds are advanced by the bank to the borrower (except as permitted by § 32.3(b)(5)), or a new borrower replaces the original borrower, or unless the OCC determines that a renewal or restructuring was undertaken as a means to evade the bank's lending limit;

(v) Amounts paid against uncollected funds in the normal process of collection; and

(vi)(A) That portion of a loan or extension of credit sold as a participation by a bank on a nonrecourse basis, provided that the participation results in a pro rata sharing of credit risk proportionate to the respective interests of the originating and participating lenders. Where a participation agreement provides that repayment must be applied first to the portions sold, a pro rata sharing will be deemed to exist only if the agreement also provides that, in the event of a default or comparable event defined in the agree-

ment, participants must share in all subsequent repayments and collections in proportion to their percentage participation at the time of the occurrence of the event.

(B) When an originating bank funds the entire loan, it must receive funding from the participants before the close of business of its next business day. If the participating portions are not received within that period, then the portions funded will be treated as a loan by the originating bank to the borrower. If the portions so attributed to the borrower exceed the originating bank's lending limit, the loan may be treated as nonconforming subject to § 32.6, rather than a violation, if:

(1) The originating bank had a valid and unconditional participation agreement with a participating bank or banks that was sufficient to reduce the loan to within the originating bank's lending limit;

(2) The participating bank reconfirmed its participation and the originating bank had no knowledge of any information that would permit the participant to withhold its participation; and

(3) The participation was to be funded by close of business of the originating bank's next business day.

(k) *Person* means an individual; sole proprietorship; partnership; joint venture; association; trust; estate; business trust; corporation; limited liability company; not-for-profit corporation; sovereign government or agency, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof; or any similar entity or organization.

(l) *Qualifying commitment to lend* means a legally binding written commitment to lend that, when combined with all other outstanding loans and qualifying commitments to a borrower, was within the bank's lending limit when entered into, and has not been disqualified.

(1) In determining whether a commitment is within the bank's lending limit when made, the bank may deduct from the amount of the commitment the amount of any legally binding loan participation commitments that are issued concurrent with the bank's commitment and that would be excluded

from the definition of “loan or extension of credit” under paragraph (j)(2)(vi) of this section.

(2) If the bank subsequently chooses to make an additional loan and that subsequent loan, together with all outstanding loans and qualifying commitments to a borrower, exceeds the bank’s applicable lending limit at that time, the bank’s qualifying commitments to the borrower that exceed the bank’s lending limit at that time are deemed to be permanently disqualified, beginning with the most recent qualifying commitment and proceeding in reverse chronological order. When a commitment is disqualified, the entire commitment is disqualified and the disqualified commitment is no longer considered a “loan or extension of credit.” Advances of funds under a disqualified or non-qualifying commitment may only be made to the extent that the advance, together with all other outstanding loans to the borrower, do not exceed the bank’s lending limit at the time of the advance, calculated pursuant to § 32.4.

(m) *Readily marketable collateral* means financial instruments and bullion that are salable under ordinary market conditions with reasonable promptness at a fair market value determined by quotations based upon actual transactions on an auction or similarly available daily bid and ask price market.

(n) *Readily marketable staple* means an article of commerce, agriculture, or industry, such as wheat and other grains, cotton, wool, and basic metals such as tin, copper and lead, in the form of standardized interchangeable units, that is easy to sell in a market with sufficiently frequent price quotations.

(1) An article comes within this definition if—

(i) The exact price is easy to determine; and

(ii) The staple itself is easy to sell at any time at a price that would not be considerably less than the amount at which it is valued as collateral.

(2) Whether an article qualifies as a readily marketable staple is determined on the basis of the conditions existing at the time the loan or extension of credit that is secured by the staples is made.

(o) *Sale of Federal funds* means any transaction between depository institutions involving the transfer of immediately available funds resulting from credits to deposit balances at Federal Reserve Banks, or from credits to new or existing deposit balances due from a correspondent depository institution.

(p) *Standby letter of credit* means any letter of credit, or similar arrangement, that represents an obligation to the beneficiary on the part of the issuer:

(1) To repay money borrowed by or advanced to or for the account of the account party;

(2) To make payment on account of any indebtedness undertaken by the account party; or

(3) To make payment on account of any default by the account party in the performance of an obligation.

§ 32.3 Lending limits.

(a) *Combined general limit.* A national bank’s total outstanding loans and extensions of credit to one borrower may not exceed 15 percent of the bank’s capital and surplus, plus an additional 10 percent of the bank’s capital and surplus, if the amount that exceeds the bank’s 15 percent general limit is fully secured by readily marketable collateral, as defined in § 32.2(m). To qualify for the additional 10 percent limit, the bank must perfect a security interest in the collateral under applicable law and the collateral must have a current market value at all times of at least 100 percent of the amount of the loan or extension of credit that exceeds the bank’s 15 percent general limit.

(b) *Loans subject to special lending limits.* The following loans or extensions of credit are subject to the lending limits set forth below. When loans and extensions of credit qualify for more than one special lending limit, the special limits are cumulative.

(1) *Loans secured by bills of lading or warehouse receipts covering readily marketable staples.* (i) A national bank’s loans or extensions of credit to one borrower secured by bills of lading, warehouse receipts, or similar documents transferring or securing title to readily marketable staples, as defined in § 32.2(n), may not exceed 35 percent